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NSC BRIEFING

2 February 1954

INDOCHINA MILITARY SITUATION

- I. New Viet Minh drive into Laos involves ten bns from Dien Bien Phu, now in Nam Hou valley.
- A. Some elements are now within 60 miles of Luang Prabang.
- B. Viet Minh still has about 22 bns around Dien Bien Phu, will make at least "face-saving" attack.
- C. Many of these troops may turn southward if Viet Minh planning large-scale Laotian campaign. *Thakhek 1 Bn*
- D. French have reinforced Luang Prabang with reserves *6 Bn -*
from delta. (12 bns remain available.) in reserve

II.

- B. Actually present Viet Minh strategy no change from that of last three years to win maximum amount of territory at a minimum risk.

III. Intensified Viet Minh guerrilla activity in Tonkin delta itself.

DOCUMENT NO. 2
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S *2010*
NEXT REVIEW DATE: *1990*

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- A. French reserves of 12 bns can hardly be spared; Viet Minh attacked six posts during week, blew up troop train, sabotaged five DC-3's, and is mining roads heavily.
- B. Six more Viet Minh bns have infiltrated delta during week, bringing regular bns there to 18.
- IV. In central Laos and Annam, Viet Minh opened small offensives.
 - A. Several minor outposts east of Savannakhet seized; enemy believed heading southwest toward Mekong again.
 - B. In Annam, enemy attacked small inland posts in Kontum-Pleiku area, while French concentrated on coast.
- V. South of Saigon, 23 guardposts and blockhouses deserted by Vietnamese militia, in recent flareup of military activity there.
 - A. Area quiet militarily past year, but Viet Minh attempting infiltrate both civil government and militia.
 - B. Viet Minh politically active here, won over Vietnamese troops.
 - C. This activity may be timed to coincide with Viet Minh military moves elsewhere, demonstrating capability for coordinated activity throughout Indochina.

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